

Energy, Environment and Agriculture Subcommittee Tentative Meeting Agenda

45th ALEC Annual Meeting | New Orleans, Louisiana
Hilton Riverside New Orleans: Churchill B1, Floor 2
Wednesday, August 8, 2018
8:30 am – 11:45 PM

8:30 AM	Environment, Call to Order, Welcome and Introductions
8:35 AM	Presentation: Free Market Environmentalism and Endangered Species Act Reform
9:00 AM	Presentation: Plastics Policy and Management
9:30 AM	Agriculture Call to Order, Welcome and Introductions
9:35 AM	Presentation: Explaining GMOs
10:00 AM	Presentation: Farm Bill Update
10:30 AM	Energy Call to Order, Welcome and Introductions
10:35AM	Presentation: Free-Market Energy challenges
11:00 AM	Panel: The Social Cost of Carbon and Regulatory Challenges
11:30 AM	Member Update

Energy, Environment and Agriculture Task Force Tentative Meeting Agenda

45th ALEC Annual Meeting | New Orleans, Louisiana
Hilton Riverside New Orleans: Churchill D, Floor 2
Thursday, August 9th
2:30 - 5:30 PM

2:30 PM	Call to Order, Welcome and Introductions
2:35 PM	Panel: Grid Resiliency and Contributions of Baseload Sources to the Grid
3:00 PM	Presentation: Gene Editing in Agriculture
3:15 PM	Model Resolution in Support of the Reconsideration of CAFE mandates
3:40 PM	Model Resolution Supporting Electricity Bill Transparency
4:00 PM	Presentation: Implications of Policy-Driven Residential Electrification
4:20 PM	Presentation: The Red Tape of FERC lawsuits
4:40 PM	Presentation: Harvesting the Energy of the Heartland: The Employment and Economic Benefits of Wind and Solar in Rural America
5:10 PM	Resolution Concerning New Source Review
5:25 PM	For the Good of the Order
5:30 PM	Adjournment
5:30 PM	Task Force Reception, Churchill B2, Sponsored by Cypress Creek Renewables

Subcommittee Speakers



Megan Hansen is Research Director at the Center for Growth and Opportunity where she manages the portfolio of policy-relevant research while ensuring student fellows receive quality mentorship and hands-on research experience. Megan previously worked as Director of Policy at Strata, where she managed the organization's research agenda. Her research and opinion commentary have been published in numerous state and national outlets including USA Today, The Salt Lake Tribune, and The Hill.

Megan earned a master's degree in economics from Utah State University in 2016. During her master's program, she participated in the Frédéric Bastiat Fellowship, a competitive program for graduate students sponsored by the Mercatus Center at George Mason University. In her free time, Megan teaches a weekly yoga class and enjoys hiking in the beautiful mountains of Northern Utah.



Keith Christman is Managing Director of Plastic Markets at the American Chemistry Council's (ACC) Plastics Division where he oversees the council's Marine Debris, Packaging, Building and Construction, Automotive, and other market team advocacy. He is also Chairman of the industry's Global Action Team leading the implementation of the *Declaration of the Global Plastics Associations for Solutions on Marine Litter*. As part of the *Declaration*, over 350 projects addressing marine litter have been implemented since 2011 by over 75 plastic associations in more than 35 countries.

Keith joined ACC in 1991 after earning a Master of Science in Economics from the University of Delaware.



Dr. Adrienne Massey, Ph.D. began her professional career as a Biological Sciences faculty member at N.C. State and then joined the N.C. Biotechnology Center where she led the Center's education, work force training and public outreach programs. A theme that runs through all of her work is a desire to share the awe and respect she has for the workings of the natural world with those who have not been fortunate enough to get to spend years immersed in studying biology. So, in addition to her "real" jobs, she has co-authored of three textbooks on biotechnology; served as the Science Advisor for the weekly PBS series, *BREAKTHROUGH!* Television's Journal of Science and Medicine; and developed interactive exhibits on biology for science and technology museums.



Daren Bakst is the Senior Research Fellow in Agricultural Policy at the Heritage Foundation. In this position, Bakst studies and writes about agricultural and environmental policy and property rights, among other issues. He has done extensive work on the farm bill and is taking the lead on Heritage's efforts to reshape the farm bill debate well before any new farm bill is proposed. His agriculture portfolio is extremely broad, covering everything from agricultural subsidies, agricultural trade, to food policy issues such as GMO food labeling and the FDA's de facto artificial trans-fat ban.

Bakst, who hails from West Palm Beach, Fla., received his bachelor's and master's degrees from George Washington University. A licensed attorney, he holds a law degree from University of Miami and a master of laws degree from American University.



Kevin D. Dayaratna specializes in tax, energy and health policy issues as Senior Statistician and Research Programmer in The Heritage Foundation's Center for Data Analysis (CDA). An applied statistician, he has researched and published on the use of high-powered statistical models in public policy, medical outcomes, business, economics, and even professional sports.

Dayaratna grew up in Princeton Junction, N.J. He did his undergraduate work at the University of California, Berkeley, majoring in applied mathematics with a specialty in mathematical physics. He also holds two masters degrees from the University of Maryland, one in business and management and the other in mathematical statistics. In 2014, Dayaratna completed his Ph.D. in mathematical statistics from the University of Maryland with specialties in Bayesian modeling and statistical computing. His doctoral dissertation was titled "Contributions to Bayesian Statistical Modeling in Public Policy Research."

Dayaratna interned at Heritage in 2012. In his spare time, he enjoys playing tennis and watching professional sports.



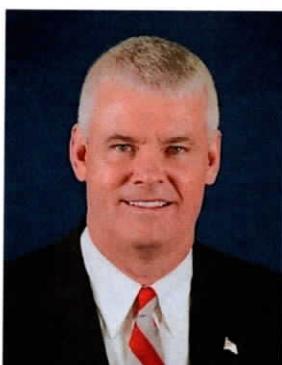
Myron Ebell is director of the Center for Energy and Environment at the Competitive Enterprise Institute. Ebell also chairs the Cooler Heads Coalition, which comprises representatives from more than two dozen non-profit organizations based in the United States and abroad that challenge global warming alarmism and oppose energy rationing policies.

Ebell has worked on energy and environment issues for more than two decades, spending more than 15 years at CEI researching and advocating for sensible energy policies that benefit everyone. Instead of policies that simply react to alarmism, Ebell advocates for climate policies that reflect the scientifically-supported view that affordable, plentiful, and reliable energy make the world safer, the environment more livable, and should be accessible to those who need it most.

Taskforce Speakers



Michelle Bloodworth is the President and CEO of ACCCE. Previously, Bloodworth served as ACCCE's Chief Operating Officer, and managed the operations of the organization, communications, member relations, and electricity market policies. Bloodworth has also served as the Executive Director of External Affairs for the Midcontinent Independent System Operator; Vice President of Business Development and State Affairs for America's Natural Gas Alliance; and Vice President of Marketing, Sales, and Communications for Energen/Alabama Gas Corporation. She began her career as a power plant engineer. Michelle has a BS in mechanical engineering from Auburn University.



Mike McGarey is Senior Advisor, State and Local Affairs for the Nuclear Energy Institute in Washington, D.C. At NEI, he coordinates the U.S. commercial nuclear industry's interactions with state and local elected officials to help increase their awareness of clean, safe, reliable nuclear energy.

McGarey joined NEI in 2004. Before that, he served for 13 years as federal liaison in Washington for two Ohio Governors, George V. Voinovich and Bob Taft. He also previously did legislative committee and communications work for Congressman Bob McEwen of Ohio.

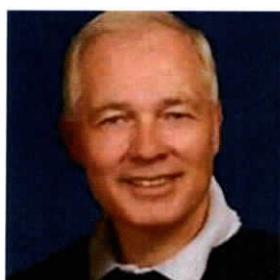
Prior to working on Capitol Hill, McGarey worked in public affairs for a telecom utility, Ameritech, in Detroit and for the American Trucking Associations in Washington.

McGarey is a Journalism graduate of The Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio. He and his family reside in Annandale, Virginia.



Kenny Stein is the Director of Policy for the Institute for Energy Research. He spent many years working for Senator Ted Cruz of Texas in various roles, including as Legislative Counsel on capitol hill, covering energy, environment and agriculture issues, and as Policy Advisor for the Cruz presidential campaign. He has past experience in political roles on national and state campaigns and additional policy roles with free market organizations like Freedomworks and the American Legislative Exchange Council.

Kenny received his Juris Doctorate from the University of Houston and his B.A. in International Relations from American University.



Dave Stevenson serves as the the Director of the Center for Energy Competitiveness at the Caesar Rodney Institute in Delaware. He has published over 100 analytic studies including major studies on the EPA Clean Power Plan, electric grid reliability, and the public policy drivers of energy cost. He regularly

appears in newspapers, radio, and TV, and is a frequent background resource to journalists.

Dave is a veteran executive of the Dupont Company where he led seven successful business expansions and start ups. He holds a B.S. in agricultural economics from Rutgers University. After leaving DuPont Dave started six successful businesses with four of the companies now run by family members.



Richard Meyer serves as a Managing Director in the Energy Markets, Analysis & Standards group at the American Gas Association, which represents more than 200 local energy companies that deliver natural gas throughout the United States. Having joined AGA in 2010, Mr. Meyer's responsibilities include policy and economic analysis to support the association's outreach to advance awareness of the important role that natural gas utilities serve in meeting the needs of a clean energy economy. Mr. Meyer's work relates to natural gas supply and demand fundamentals, residential and large-volume markets, greenhouse gas emissions and climate-related policy, and natural gas

distributed generation technologies like combined heat and power. Prior to AGA, Mr. Meyer was a Senior Associate with ICF International in its Fuels and Technology group. There he worked on a range of natural gas and propane market modeling, analyses, and climate-related projects. He has a M.A. in Global Environmental Politics from American University and a M.S. in Physics from California Polytechnic State University in San Luis Obispo, California.



Mike McKenna is the President of MWR Strategies. Prior to this, he worked in senior positions in a variety of opinion research and communications companies. Mike has an extensive academic and professional background in public opinion research and communications. In addition to his work with MWR Strategies, he has worked with Andres McKenna Research, Vox Populi Communications, and the Luntz Research Companies. He has consulted a wide variety of political and corporate clients with respect to government relations, opinion research, marketing, message development and communications strategies. Mike has also worked as the Director of Policy and External Affairs for the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality and served as an external relations specialist at both the U.S. Department of Energy and the U.S. Department of Transportation.



Seth Kaplan is Senior Manager, Regional Government Affairs, for the Eastern Region at EDP Renewables North America working in the Mid-West, the Northeast as well as the Southeast. In that role he manages interactions between the company and key local, state and regional governments, legislatures, agencies and institutions. The focus of his work is on building markets and contract opportunities for the company's wind and solar projects and assisting in project development by building positive relationships with both private and public stakeholders.

Over the last twenty years he has managed and worked on a wide range of issues including state, regional and federal energy regulation and policy.

He co-founded RENEW Northeast, a regional renewable energy trade association, and is Board Chair of that organization. He is also Vice-Chair of the Mid-Atlantic Renewable Energy Association and Chairs the Eastern Policy Committee of the American Wind Energy Association.



Johnny Casana directs legislative and regulatory affairs for Pattern Energy, which is among the largest renewable energy companies in North America with an operating portfolio of more than 4,800 MW of wind, solar, storage and transmission assets representing over \$12 Billion of private capital investment. Mr. Casana has over a decade of experience in renewable energy project development and political affairs management. He is the Western Policy Chair for the American Wind Energy Association, and serves on the board of directors for the Interwest Energy Alliance, the Clean Power Campaign, and the Fix the Grid initiative. Pattern is headquartered in San Francisco, California, and Mr. Casana is based out of Portland, Oregon.

PLANT AND ANIMAL GENE EDITING

What Is Gene Editing?

- Gene editing technologies — such as CRISPR — use naturally-occurring processes to make small changes to an organism's own genes in order to modify a specific characteristic. Gene editing occurs constantly in nature. This cutting-edge advancement has applications in plant and animal agriculture as well as human health.
- Plant and animal breeding are continually improving as people learn more about biology. Gene editing is really just the newest tool in a very long history of biological advancement.
- Currently there are no gene-edited agricultural products on the market.
- Agricultural scientists and plant and animal breeders are researching and developing gene-edited agricultural and food products with specific societal benefits, including:
 - Eggs, milk, wheat, and other food products, with lower allergenic potential
 - Healthier soybean oils that replace trans-fat
 - Pest- and disease-resistant fruits and vegetables
 - Disease-resistant animals, which improves animal welfare
- Gene-edited food and feed products are regulated by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration under the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act.

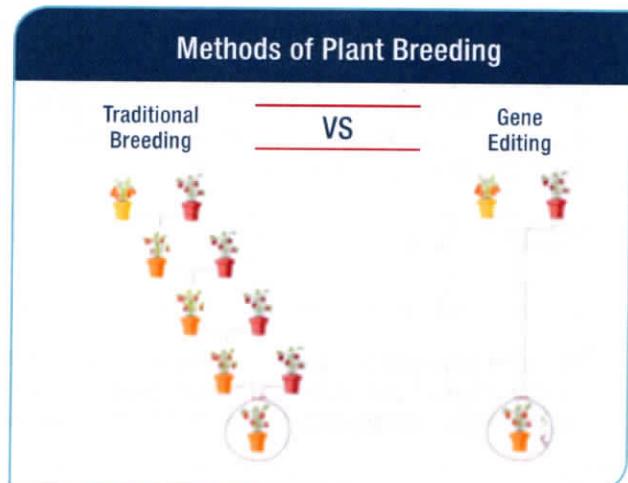


What Is CRISPR?

- CRISPR (pronounced "crisper") is an acronym for "Clustered, Regularly Interspaced, Short Palindromic Repeats," and refers to a recently developed genome editing technology that can revise, remove, and replace DNA.
- Zinc-finger (ZFNs), TALENs, rAAV, Transposons are examples of other gene editing technologies.

How Does Gene Editing Work?

- Evolving methods like gene editing allow us to work within a plant's own gene pool — without the introduction of foreign DNA — to achieve the same end-result that could be achieved through more traditional plant breeding methods, but in a more targeted way.
- This added precision allows scientists to forgo multiple cycles of plant selection from a population of thousands of individual plants and move to testing elite lines sooner.



USDA Issues Clarifying Statement on The Regulation of Gene Edited Products

On Wednesday, March 28, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue issued a statement providing clarification on the USDA's oversight of plants produced through new breeding techniques, including genome editing.

The statement says:

"Under its biotechnology regulations, USDA does not regulate or have any plans to regulate plants that could otherwise have been developed through traditional breeding techniques as long as they are not plant pests or developed using plant pests. This includes a set of new techniques that are increasingly being used by plant breeders to produce new plant varieties that are indistinguishable from those developed through traditional breeding methods."

"The newest of these methods, such as genome editing, expand traditional plant breeding tools because they can introduce new plant traits more quickly and precisely, potentially saving years or even decades in bringing needed new varieties to farmers."

It's important to note that the USDA statement reaffirms and clarifies existing policy, which sends a clear message to other governments that its regulatory policy on gene edited plants has not changed, and that gene edited plants are regulated under the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act.



What People Are Saying

"Plant breeding innovation holds enormous promise for helping protect crops against drought and diseases while increasing nutritional value and eliminating allergens. Using this science, farmers can continue to meet consumer expectations for healthful, affordable food produced in a manner that consumes fewer natural resources."

— U.S. Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue

"Applications in agriculture and animal health have the potential to deliver major advances to help feed the world."

— Katrine Bosley, President & CEO, Editas Medicine, Inc.

"Over the next decade, gene editing could help humanity overcome some of the biggest and most persistent challenges in global health and development... Gene editing to make crops more abundant and resilient could be a lifesaver on a massive scale."

— Bill Gates, Co-chair of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

"Gene editing is a potentially revolutionary tool that will improve the lives of humans in clear and tangible ways."

— Michael Specter, Columnist for The New Yorker

"The most widespread use until now has been in agriculture, to create disease-resistant wheat and rice, and modify tomatoes and soybeans to improve yields. CRISPR's use in humans is more recent, but the possibility of the diseases it could treat and the lives that could be improved is remarkable."

— Senate Health Committee Chairman Lamar Alexander (R-Tenn.)

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE RECONSIDERATION OF CORPORATE AVERAGE FUEL ECONOMY (CAFE) STANDARDS

WHEREAS, Congress first established Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards through the Energy Policy and Conservation Act of 1975; and

WHEREAS, the CAFE standards were implemented largely in response to the 1973 oil embargo in an effort to reduce foreign imports of petroleum; and

WHEREAS, the CAFE standards are now a relic of a disproven narrative of resource scarcity, as the United States is currently poised to become the largest producer of oil and natural gas in the world and a net exporter of energy; and

WHEREAS, as originally enacted, Congress authorized one regulator – the U.S. Department of Transportation’s National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) – to carry out the program; and

WHEREAS, under the Obama administration, two federal agencies (NHTSA and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency) and one State agency (the California Air Resources Board) were jointly placed in charge of our nation’s fuel economy standards under “One National Program”; and

WHEREAS, under this construct, California was given significantly disproportionate influence in the setting of national fuel economy standards relative to the other 49 United States; and

WHEREAS, the Energy Policy and Conservation Act of 1975 makes clear that no State may “adopt or enforce a law or regulation related to fuel economy standards” when a Federal average fuel economy standard is in effect; and

WHEREAS, it is contrary to federalism to tolerate an approach in which one State has a unique and disproportionate impact on the creation and implementation of any national standard; and

WHEREAS, the existing CAFE mandates, if left unaltered, are likely to increase the cost of an average new vehicle by several thousand dollars, thus pricing millions of Americans – particularly the economically disadvantaged – out of the new car market entirely; and

WHEREAS, a fundamental question associated with the current fuel economy mandates is whether American families should be allowed to determine for themselves which types of vehicles they may purchase and drive, or if unelected bureaucrats in Washington, D.C. and Sacramento, California should be allowed to make that determination; and

WHEREAS, freedom of choice and free markets represent foundational, cornerstone principles of the American way of life and governance in the United States, and are necessary to ensure that American families, farmers, truckers, and businesses are able to purchase, drive, and repair the cars, trucks, and other vehicles that meet their specific and individual needs; and

WHEREAS, current Federal fuel economy mandates are representative of the kinds of regulations that limit – rather than encourage – freedom of choice, free markets, and the ability of individuals to make decisions regarding what kinds of vehicles best meet their own needs;

NOW THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED, that the State of [NAME OF STATE] fully supports the process being jointly undertaken by the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to reconsider the augural Corporate Average Fuel Economy standards and the Final Determination of the Mid-Term Evaluation of greenhouse gas emissions standards for model year 2022-2025 light-duty vehicles, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the State of [STATE] opposes the Federal government continuing to grant California an outsized role in determining vehicle fuel economy standards for the other 49 United States.

**RESOLUTION SUPPORTING STATES ESTABLISH TRANSPARENCY WITH THE COST OF LEGISLATION AFFECTING
REGULATED UTILITIES BE SHOWN AS LINE ITEMS ON CONSUMER BILLS**

WHEREAS, hidden costs of taxes, fees, and government imposed regulations are anathema to the very core of our system of government, to our beliefs of how a free people are to be treated, and to the intent of our various state constitutions; and

WHEREAS, the system of state public utility commissions was established to provide the benefit of avoided cost of duplicate infrastructure investment in certain critical services such as electricity, and natural gas, while protecting consumers from predatory pricing by government established monopolies; and

WHEREAS, public utility commissions are required to operate in the most transparent way to approve pricing policies of regulated utilities to a “just and reasonable” standard; and

WHEREAS, energy costs impact every facet of our economy, and the availability of reliable electricity is the critical resource needed to bring people out of the hardships of poverty, such as, the rate of infant mortality, life expectancy, literacy, education, and general standard of living, according to the “United Nations Human Development Index”; and

WHEREAS, policies that raise the cost of energy fall primarily on the poorest members of our society with 30 percent of the population spending between 22 percent and 70 percent of their after tax income on energy, according to the U. S. census “Current Population Survey”; and

NOW, THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED that (state legislature) hereby urges the adoption of any legislated action targeting utilities, and thereby affecting regulated utility rates, be shown as a line item on consumer utility bills.

MODEL RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE EPA'S NEW SOURCE REVIEW REGULATION

WHEREAS, the Clean Air Act (CAA) new source review (NSR) and prevention of significant deterioration (PSD) programs and related U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's New Source Review rule requires power plants and industrial Agency (EPA) rules require facilities to undergo review and obtain a permit prior ~~for~~to the construction of a new facility or "major modification" ~~to~~of an existing facility;; and

WHEREAS, according to EPA regulations a "major modification" is (1) a non-routine physical or operational change at an existing facility that (2) causes a significant increase in emissions;; and

WHEREAS, despite decades of litigation, it has never been fully resolved what a "non-routine" change is and how to determine whether the change might cause a "significant" emissions increase;; and

WHEREAS, the EPA has historically taken the position that certain projects that improve ~~reliability, efficiency, and safety~~ are "non-routine" and therefore require a NSR permit;; and

WHEREAS, being subject to NSR entails a lengthy permitting process and often the installation of ~~the most advanced (and costly) expensive~~ emissions controlsavailable; and

WHEREAS, EPA's NSR program has become a major deterrent to otherwise beneficial projects that would result in more efficient ~~power plants with increased reliability and enhanced worker safety, facilities;~~ and

WHEREAS, the uncertainty surrounding NSR requirements has led to a ~~lack~~lower level of investments in efficiency upgrades, which would ~~lead to~~deter more efficient electric generation, grid management, and reduced environmental impacts;; and

WHEREAS, currently there are ~~four separate~~ bills pending before Congress to bring about a common-sense approach to the NSR rule.

NOW, THEREFOR BE IT RESOLVED, that the State of _____ urges the U.S. EPA to revise its NSR rule to make it clear and straightforward that efficiency, ~~reliability, and safety~~ improvements are deemed to be "routine" and, therefore, are not subject to NSR permitting;; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the State of _____ urges ~~congress~~Congress to solidify such changes by passing legislation ~~currently pending~~ before the 115th Session of Congress.

RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE EPA'S NEW SOURCE REVIEW REGULATION

WHEREAS, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's New Source Review rule requires power plants and industrial facilities to obtain a permit prior for the construction of a new facility or "major modification" to an existing facility, and

WHEREAS, according to EPA regulations a "major modification" is (1) a non-routine physical or operational change at an existing facility that (2) causes a significant increase in emissions, and

WHEREAS, despite decades of litigation, it has never been fully resolved what a "non-routine" change is and how to determine whether the change might cause a "significant" emissions increase, and

WHEREAS, the EPA has historically taken the position that certain projects that improve reliability, efficiency, and safety are "non-routine" and therefore require a NSR permit, and

WHEREAS, being subject to NSR entails a lengthy permitting process and the installation of the most advanced (and costly) emissions controls available, and

WHEREAS, EPA's NSR program has become a major deterrent to otherwise beneficial projects that would result in more efficient power plants with increased reliability and enhanced worker safety, and

WHEREAS, the uncertainty surrounding NSR requirements has led to a lack of investments in efficiency upgrades, which would lead to more efficient electric generation, grid management, and reduced environmental impacts, and

WHEREAS, currently there are four separate bills pending before Congress to bring about a common-sense approach to the NSR rule.

NOW, THEREFOR BE IT RESOLVED, that the State of _____ urges the U.S. EPA to revise its NSR rule to make it clear and straightforward that efficiency, reliability, and safety improvements are deemed to be "routine" and, therefore, are not subject to NSR permitting, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the State of _____ urges congress to solidify such changes by passing legislation currently pending before the 115th Session of Congress



Flexibility, Fuels and the Future



Rep. Randy Fine

Randy Fine represents Florida's Space Coast as the State Representative from Florida's House District 53. He is a third- generation Floridian, is married to his wife Wendy, and together they have two boys, Jacob (10) and David (6). A lifelong entrepreneur, Randy started his first business while in college and built multiple successful businesses in energy, retail, technology, and hospitality sectors over his 20+ year career. In the legislature, he is the Chairman of the Brevard County Delegation and the Vice Chairman of the Careers & Competition Subcommittee and serves on a wide range of other committees and subcommittees. He received his undergraduate degree in government, magna cum laude, from Harvard College, and his MBA, with high distinction, from Harvard Business School, where he was the youngest graduate in a generation and was named a Baker Scholar, the school's highest academic honor. While at Harvard Business School, he also served as a Teaching Fellow in Economics.



Leo Goff, PhD

Doctor Goff is the program manager for CNA's Military Advisory Board, a group of retired three- and four-star flag and general officers from the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps who study pressing issues of the day to assess their impact on America's national security. Their focus for the last several years has been on climate, energy, and national security. Additionally, he is a retired Navy Captain. He was the commanding officer of a nuclear submarine and a submarine tender. Since retirement in early 2011 he has held the position of president and owner of ACARYIS; a consulting company providing executive solutions, focused on the ways in which energy and the environment impact organizational alignment and strategic direction. Doctor Goff holds a PhD in organizational behavior with a concentration in leadership; a Master's degree in Public Administration; and a Master's Degree in Executive Business Administration. He earned his commission at the United States Naval Academy, graduating with a Bachelor of Science in Ocean Engineering.



Michael Nasi

Mike Nasi is a partner with Jackson Walker LLP where he practices environmental and energy law. Mike has been practicing before state and federal environmental and energy agencies and appellate courts for 25 years and active in multi-state carbon capture, utilization and storage (CCUS) projects for 15 years. Mike is counsel for parties in ongoing EPA regulatory proceedings relating to carbon dioxide, interstate air quality, regional haze, and coal combustion residuals including appeals pending before the United States Courts of Appeals for the Fifth, Eighth, Tenth, and D.C. Circuits, as well as the Supreme Court of the United States. Mike helps coordinate multi-state outreach efforts regarding these and other regulations impacting the electric power and mining sectors, appears at hearings and energy policy events across the country, and is published in several trade, law, and business journals on environmental law and energy policy topics. Mike is the Chairman of the Central Texas Salvation Army Advisory Board and is a Board Member for the West Austin Youth Association (WAYA).



Laura Schepis

Laura Schepis was named Executive Director of PACE, the Partnership for Affordable Clean Energy, in July 2017. PACE is a nonprofit organization focused on promoting responsible energy policy and devoted to advocating for affordable, reliable energy for customers. Laura's background is in government relations and strategic communications, with two decades of experience in energy advocacy on the federal level. After practicing law in Georgia, Laura relocated to Washington, DC where she worked for the National Association of Development Organizations, the American Public Gas Association, and the American Public Power Association. For three years, Laura served as Vice President of Political Affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperatives Association. Laura has quarterbacked federal lobbying efforts on cybersecurity and disaster recovery and contributed to efforts on many other issues, including transportation appropriations, commodity trading rules, energy efficiency, and renewable energy standards. She also designed and led national grassroots and political campaigns for electric utilities on climate change. Laura lives in Virginia with her husband and daughter.

Five Key Takeaways

1 Energy Diversity

Electric utilities and other energy providers are actively working to accommodate consumer preferences for renewable energy and other innovations.

2 Reliability

While renewable resources have made great strides in terms of technology and costs, intermittency issues remain and therefore most of the electricity generation supply will continue to be derived from traditional baseload sources for the foreseeable future.

3 Energy Supply

Geopolitics are completely entrenched in our domestic energy decisions. The U.S. now can export natural gas to allies and trading partners, both boosting the American economy while minimizing the influence of hostile regimes. However, participating in the global natural gas market may one day impact domestic natural gas prices.

4 Energy Security

Resilience and energy security are foremost concerns; policymakers should enable programs and practices that allow consumers to benefit from ownership of fuel reserves.

5 Transparency

In order to ensure a reliable and affordable energy mix, and with so many variables on the table, policymakers, consumers and utilities need transparency about the total costs of generation resources. Claims about negative pricing should be examined and exposed.

